

**Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
TerreStar Corporation Request for Temporary)	WT Docket No. 16-290
Waiver of Substantial Service Requirements)	

Reply Comments of Philips Healthcare

Philips Healthcare (“Philips”) submits these Reply Comments in support of the above-captioned Request for Temporary Waiver submitted by TerreStar Corporation (“TerreStar”).¹ Commission grant of this waiver for a three-year period is in the public interest because it would allow the expansion of critically-needed patient health monitoring while avoiding the substantial potential for interference between incompatible systems in immediately adjacent spectrum.

Background

Philips is one of the largest manufacturers of medical equipment in the United States and the world leader in patient monitoring equipment. Headquartered in Andover, Massachusetts, Philips Healthcare delivers solutions that acquire, analyze, and present patient data in ways that are meaningful for clinicians in the most challenging clinical areas. Philips provides clinical information and patient care solutions that help to improve and save lives, lower the overall cost of healthcare, and simplify clinician workflow.

¹ TerreStar, Request for Temporary Waiver of Substantial Service Requirements, WT Docket No. 16-290 (dated Aug. 15, 2016); Public Notice, DA 16-1029 (WTB, rel. Sept. 14, 2016).

Wireless Medical Telemetry Service (“WMTS”) systems are essential monitoring tools in today’s healthcare environment. Wireless monitoring enables healthcare providers to recognize patterns that otherwise might go unnoticed and to respond more rapidly to changes in their patients’ conditions. Wireless monitoring also helps to lower healthcare costs.

Philips is the largest provider of WMTS equipment operating in the 1.4 GHz spectrum. Its devices are monitoring patients around the clock, seven days a week, at hospitals throughout the United States. The TerreStar licenses at issue in this proceeding are for spectrum that is immediately adjacent to the WMTS 1.4 GHz spectrum upon which many of our wireless medical monitoring systems rely.

Grant of TerreStar’s Request for a Three-Year Waiver Would Address Growing WMTS Spectrum Requirements and Alleviate Concerns With Potential Interference

As the leading provider of 1.4 GHz WMTS systems to healthcare facilities in the United States, Philips long has sought access to additional spectrum in the 1.4 GHz range for the purpose of expanding the capabilities of wireless monitoring and supporting a higher density of devices.² Consequently, over the past year we explored with TerreStar in lengthy discussions both the interference potential of WiMAX 802.16-type systems and possible extension of WMTS-like services to TerreStar’s commercial spectrum. The interference potential of deploying WiMAX 802.16 systems adjacent to WMTS spectrum is very real and of significant concern to the WMTS community. Philips therefore welcomed the creative approach that TerreStar described in its Waiver Request.

² See, e.g., Reply Comments of Philips Healthcare Systems in response to the Second Further Notice in WP Docket 07-100 (dated June 1, 2010).

We are genuinely excited by TerreStar's proposal as submitted to the Commission. TerreStar's proposal is consistent with our discussions and has our full support because it provides a practical pathway to substantially improving patient care in the United States through wireless monitoring.

Philips has emphasized (1) the need for a realistically sufficient period to extend WMTS services to the commercial spectrum, (2) the need for a substantial long-term commitment beyond the initial build-out period to ensure uninterrupted service to patients and clients after service is initiated, and (3) the need for regulatory certainty to undertake the investments necessary to implement this plan. TerreStar proposed a three-year period for initial build-out, and based its waiver request upon such a period. In our opinion, this build-out goal is aggressive, but achievable, if accompanied by a longer-term commitment for continued access and the regulatory certainty needed as a basis for commitment of services and equipment. TerreStar has met our most important requirements, but prompt Commission action consistent with these requirements is needed in order to proceed.

We note that ASHE, in its Comments, discusses a number of concerns. Initially we had some of the same concerns, but discussion with TerreStar has satisfied us that our concerns and objectives can be resolved and met in a multiple number of practical ways. In our view, it is a matter of selecting the solutions that best fit the needs of healthcare facilities, manufacturers and suppliers, and the spectrum licensee. While these issues are best handled with the flexibility that is accommodated by private party understandings and agreements, Commission action on TerreStar's request is integral to this process.

We believe that all information needed for action is on the record. Therefore we urge the Commission to grant the waiver request at its earliest opportunity.

Conclusion

The TerreStar Request for Waiver, if granted, will enable new capabilities and the growth of wireless medical telemetry operations in the 1.4 GHz band. Philips is committed to working with all parties to achieve the improved patient care and outcomes that will be made possible by extending wireless medical telemetry to this commercial spectrum. Accordingly, we urge the Commission to grant TerreStar's request.

Respectfully Submitted,



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